

On 24 November 1997 I collected several examples of these mines. After overwintering them in an unheated out-house I brought them indoors in early January 1998 and adults began to emerge on 12 February. The description of this moth's distribution given in *MBGBI 2* states that it did not, at that time, appear to be extending its range. The discovery of *P. strigulatella* on an isolated group of grey alders after at least seven years absence shows that it may now be spreading. I have since found it on the Balgrove industrial estate on the western edge of Swindon, Wiltshire and at Baynes Wood nature reserve near Greenham Common, Berkshire where it has been known for some time (Baker, 1994. *The butterflies and moths of Berkshire*). I have also reared it from alder *Alnus glutinosa* leaves found in a woodland at Blacknest near Brimpton Common, Berkshire on 10 November 1997. These mines were greenish in colour on their upper and under surfaces, but similar to those in grey alder in other respects. Baker reports *strigulatella* to be present here in grey alder, but I could not find these trees.

If *P. strigulatella* is able to utilise the common alder species this may explain how it has managed to colonise the rarer grey alders at Medmenham. I seem to recollect being told recently that others have found it in *A. glutinosa* too, but cannot recollect who, where or when.— I. SIMS, 2 The Delph, Lower Earley, Reading, Berkshire RG6 3AN.

***Stigmella ulmariae* (Wocke) (Lep.: Nepticulidae) in Buckinghamshire**

On 11 October 1996 I found vacated mines of *Stigmella ulmariae* in the leaves of meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* growing in the grounds of WRc at Medmenham near Marlow in Buckinghamshire. On the 17 and 18 September 1997 I searched these plants in this area and found 10 tenanted mines and as many that were already vacated. The larvae were overwintered out of doors in an earthenware flower-pot containing potting compost and sphagnum moss that had been sunk up to the rim in my garden and covered with white polythene sheet. The pot was bought indoors on 1 April 1998 and on 6 April an adult (male) emerged.

This moth is localised to fenland in Oxfordshire, Cambridgeshire and north Hampshire (*MBGBI 1*). The meadowsweet plants at Medmenham are growing in a wet meadow with a peat top soil. This area is small in size, about one acre, and is surrounded by farmland. I believe it to be a remnant of a more extensive wet meadow that once occupied the valley of the River Thames in this area. This belief is supported by the presence of around 50 species of plants associated with such habitat, including the southern marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, common meadow-rue *Thalictrum flavum*, bog stitchwort *Stellaria palustris* and ragged robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi* on the site. It is an interesting though small area and is sensitive to environmental disturbance, but is actively managed by a group of company employees on a volunteer basis. This involves subjecting the vegetation to various cutting regimes designed to produce short and long sward vegetation with associated fauna. Some areas are left undisturbed to provide a stable litter layer for invertebrates.

Recently the local water company installed a sewage pumping station very close to this site. A large area of orange balsam *Impatiens capensis* that supported a population of the RDB3 Balsam Carpet *Xanthorhoe biriviata* (Borkh.) was destroyed as a consequence. It also soon became apparent that the site was now subject to increased drainage, and so to try and counter this the conservation volunteers removed several large poplars, planted originally to act as a screen during building work. The aim of this was to reduce water loss from the sub-soil due to transpiration by the poplars and to eliminate the heavy leaf-fall and shading they produced. I hope to find evidence of *S. ulmariae* on the site this year.—I. SIMS, 2 The Delph, Lower Earley, Reading, Berkshire RG6 3AN.

The Small Quaker *Orthosia cruda* ([D.& S.]) (Lep.: Noctuidae) in Kincardineshire

A single male *Orthosia cruda* was caught in the Rothamsted Insect Survey light-trap at Glensaugh, Kincardineshire (Site No. 567; O.S. grid ref. NO671782) on 26.iv.1996. Although widespread over the British Isles, this species is recorded less frequently in Scotland (Skinner, B., 1984. *Colour Identification Guide to Moths of the British Isles*. Viking) and has not previously been caught in the north-eastern Watsonian vice-counties of Kincardineshire, South Aberdeenshire, North Aberdeenshire and Banffshire (R.M. Palmer, *pers. comm.*). This record is therefore a significant contribution to our knowledge of the distribution of *O. cruda*.

Thanks are extended to Stuart Wright for operating the trap at Glensaugh which is part of the national Environmental Change Network project and to Bob Palmer for his comments on *O. cruda* in Scotland.—ADRIAN M. RILEY AND JOHN E. BATER, Entomology and Nematology Department, IACR Rothamsted, Harpenden, Hertfordshire AL5 2JQ.

Unseasonal Lepidoptera records from Rothamsted Insect Survey light-traps in 1997

The observations below are relevant to those studying changes in Lepidoptera phenology related to current discussions on climate change (Woiwod, I.P., 1997. Detecting the effects of climate change on Lepidoptera. *Journal of Insect Conservation* 1: 149-158) and follows similar previous articles in this journal (e.g. Riley, A.M., 1995. Unseasonal Lepidoptera records from Rothamsted Insect Survey light-traps. *Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.* 107: 255-256).

During the spring of 1997 several species of Lepidoptera were recorded in Rothamsted light-traps earlier than usually expected. Most notable of these were Common Wave *Cabera exanthemata* (Scopoli), an individual of which was caught at Hamstreet, Kent (Site 472; O.S. grid ref.: TR 004 334) on 4 April and Scorched Carpet *Ligdia adustata* ([Denis & Schiffermüller]), one at Rothamsted, Hertfordshire (Site 611 (White Horse Spinney); O.S. grid ref.: TL 114 129) on 9 April. Both of these species do not usually emerge as adults until May.

Four species were recorded considerably outside their normal flight period. These are listed below with the expected months of emergence given in brackets.